

March 21, 2007

Chairman Sonju and Members of the Transportation Committee:

For the record, My name is Shyla Patera, speaking on behalf of North Central Independent Living Services in Black Eagle, Montana. I wish to comment on SB160. North Central Independent Living Services has voiced concerns regarding SB160. For the past fifteen months, my primary focus has been public transportation advocacy. The one fact that I can state with some certainty is that Montana has many passionate transportation advocates. North Central Independent Living Services advocates for increased public transportation access, but we wonder if the original intent of TransAde will remain intact to serve Seniors and People with Disabilities as nonurban rural providers seek to use TransAde funds as 5311 matching funds only.

Will 5311 programs be mandated to follow the coordination requirements as outlined in the Elderly and Individuals with Disabilities program circular? We direct your attention to Lines 16 & 17 which state: **"Whereas this expansion of service addresses coordinated transportation options available to Montana's transit-dependent residents"**.

North Central's interpretation of this would be and is that this money then if used to match 5311 monies would then need to meet the coordination requirements which exist in the 5310, 5316, and 5317 monies.

An example of this interpretation follows for your consideration: If there is a 5311 and 5310 provider within the same community and if the 5311 provider used TransAde money to match for 5311 federal money then they would have to meet the 5310, 5316, 5317 coordination requirements. If a recipient of an existing Aged and Disabled provider requested service from the 5311 provider the 5311 provider would have to provide the ride and could not opt out based on the 5311 allowance provided to it.

In plain English, we are asking if 5311, or nonurban transportation providers, have

to follow the guidelines set forth when TransAde was established by the members of the 2001 legislature. TransAde was established in order for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities to gain access to transportation .

Accountability measures must be set so that monies must be used for the transportation of Seniors and Persons with Disabilities.

Could you please provide us with an interpretation of the legislative intent regarding coordination as outlined in lines 16 & 17 of SB 160? . Thank You !

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